

# THE MONTE CARLO OF ASIA

A Visit to the Gambling Hells of Macao, Where Fortunes Are Lost and Won at Fan-Tan.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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Macao, Nov. 21, 1900.—I write this in the Monte Carlo of Asia, where fan-tan runs riot. Day and night, Sundays and week days, year in and year out, these gambling houses are open. This is the center of the lottery system of west Asia. The Manila company has moved here, and the fortunes which went to the Philippines now come to Macao. The chief gambling is in fan-tan, in which thousands of dollars are lost and won every night by betting on the number of copper cash upon the bowl.

## IN A CHINESE GAMBLING HELL.

I am sitting in a gambling hell as I write these notes. It is in the heart of this Portuguese capital, on the Rua de Jogo, the street of the gamblers. It is midnight, and the pavement is thronged with hard-faced Chinese waiting to see the ball fall into one of the numbered pockets of the roulette.

There are male roysters and females of pleasure. The rest of the city is dark, but the Rua de Jogo blazes with Chinese lanterns. Its stores are open, and gambling signs invite you to "back the tiger." The talk is of winning and losing. There is an almonder, long-queened man who tells how he won ten thousand dollars last week, and how a Frenchman came here to break the bank and lost four thousand in one night. Listen! He says the man got it all back the next night and fifteen thousand dollars more.

We go through a well-lighted passage and enter. The ground floor is of Chinese. That large room at the right is crowded. Yellow men and women are gathered about a long table covered with matting, upon which money and chips and Chinese cards are lying. Look up through that opening which runs to the roof with galleries at the second and third floors. See the hundreds of anxious, almonder eyes which are looking down upon the table. Notice their owners as they let down little baskets with strings. Each basket contains the money which its owner wishes to stake. When the game is over they pull up their winnings. As the baskets go down they sing out the number where the money is to be placed, and at that moment the bankers shout the numbers which win.

## HOW FAN TAN IS PLAYED.

In another room they are playing fan-tan in much the same way. The betting is all on the number of copper coins under a bowl. The banker takes a couple of handfuls of coins from a pile at one side of the table and covers them with a brass bowl. Later on he will count them in, and the betting is as to whether they will come out even or whether one, two or three cash will be left.

The bets flow in from all parts of the room. There are hundreds of dollars there, the tables and the croupier calls "Stop!" He raises the bowl and begins to pull out the coins with two chopsticks, taking four out at a time. He does it so slowly that there is no chance of deception.

The game looks fair, and I put my money on No. 1, only to find that 3 wins the stake. The next time I put is on 2, but luck is against me and it goes into the pile of the banker. Had I won, I would have gotten three times my stake.

This game of fan-tan is played throughout the Far East. There are different ways of counting, but of course the chances are always in favor of the banker. In some games the chances are almost even, but the banker has a commission of 7 per cent on all that passes over the table.

There is a game where the gambler has one chance of winning. He is retaining his stake and one of losing it. This is called ching-tow. If at the close of the count one coin is left, he gets an amount equal to his stake; if two or three, he saves his stake, but if four, he loses it. Another game allows the gambler one chance of winning double the amount he puts down, two of losing and one of retaining his stake. There is still another where he has a chance of winning three times the amount he puts down and three chances of losing it. The game is, in many ways, like roulette, although there is no wheel for the rolling ball.

## THE CHIEF GAMBLERS OF THE WORLD.

The Chinese are among the greatest gamblers of the world. You find gambling houses in every Chinese colony, in every Chinese city and in every village. The people gamble on the roadside, in the tea houses and on board ship. The steamers which cross the Pacific from San Francisco to Shanghai often carry a thousand or more Chinese in the steerage. They are usually men who have made money in the United States, and are going home to spend it. They gamble all the way over. A dozen different games are running at one time, and in some cases the stakes are high.

## UPON SOME OF THE STEAMSHIPS THE OFFICERS AND SAILORS COME DOWN AND JOIN IN THE GAMBLING, AND I HAVE SEEN AMERICANS, BOTH WOMEN AND MEN, SIT DOWN WITH THESE DIRTY CHINESE TO PLAY. DURING MY LAST TRIP ACROSS THE PACIFIC I SAW THE AGENT OF ONE OF THE BIG MILWAUKEE BREWERIES LOSE \$907 AT FAN-TAN, WHILE A VERY PRETTY AMERICAN WIDOW, WHO WAS, I FEAR, NOT AS GOOD AS SHE SHOULD BE, LOST MORE THAN \$500 IN THE SAME WAY. THIS WOMAN WAS WELL DRESSED AND AS NICE LOOKING AS ANY GIRL YOU WILL MEET IN SIX MONTHS, SQUATTED DOWN IN HER PARIS-MODE DRESS ON THE DECK OF A STEAMER WITH PILES OF SILVER DOLLARS BEFORE HER, RISKING THEM IN A HUGE RACE, TIME ON THE COIN UNDER THE FOOT. THE SIGHT WAS A DISGRACEFUL ONE, AND THE FACT THAT GAMBLING IS PERMITTED ON STEAMERS CARRYING THE AMERICAN FLAG IS A DISGRACE TO THE UNITED STATES. I HEARD IT HINTED THAT THE CHINESE KEEPERS OF THE GAME COULD A PROMOTION OF THEIR WINNINGS TO THE AMERICAN OFFICERS, AND THE LATTER TOLD ME THAT THE CHINESE MUST BE PERMITTED TO GAMBLE OR THEY WOULD TAKE OTHER BOATS.

## CHINESE SPORTING HOUSES.

Gambling is forbidden by law in China. There are many people who do not think of gambling as a crime, but a person would of betting on a horse race. Gambling, however, is tolerated by the officials, who make money out of it by levying blackmail upon such houses. Indeed, there are gaming shops right at the doors of some of the government offices. They are to be found in the back and side streets and sometimes in the business streets.

Many sporting houses are conducted by joint stock companies and some by private parties. It is against the law for women to open such houses, but the



GAMBLING GAME PROHIBITED AFTER 11 P. M.

flower boats of Canton, the most gorgeous palaces of sin to be found in Asia, are accustomed to have Chinese games, and they go on in secret in many such establishments upon land.

## GAMBLING FOR MEALS.

Nearly every other cook shop in China is a gambling shop. Here you risk your money as to whether you will get something to eat or not. The gamblers sit at the restaurant tables as bamboo tubes as big around as a tin cup, and about a foot high, each containing several long sticks of the size of a crocheted needle. On the end of each stick are little dots of ink spots similar to those on dice. The man who wants a meal pays so many cash for a chance. The tube is shaken and he pulls out a certain number of the sticks. If the dots on these are the winning ones he gets double the amount of his money in food; if not, he gets nothing. I have seen cake peddlers jingling such sticks on the wharves of Tien Tsin among the coolies who were unloading the vessels, at lunch time, and each of the laborers had perhaps a cent or two to spend for his lunch. In nine cases out of ten he would bet with the peddler, taking the chance of getting two big cakes or going hungry.

Another class of gambling is with three short sticks. The gambler bets a piece of money to the end of one of the sticks and grasps the three sticks in his hand so that the money is concealed. The gambler fastens an equal amount to the other end of one of the sticks. If he puts it on the stick on which the money of the dealer is he wins; otherwise he loses. In this case the man who runs the game has two chances at winning.

## THEY FIGHT QUAILS AND CRICKETS.

There is little gambling on horse racing except at the open ports and at Hongkong. Bird fights and insect fights take the places of bull fights and races. There is some chicken fighting in the interior, and almost everywhere there are quail fights and cricket fights. Quail fighting is done on a table with a little fence about its edge. The fighting quails have been starved for some time. As they are put into the pen a few grains of rice or wheat are laid before them and they at once begin to fight over them. They are trained for the purpose, and a good fighter is worth \$100 and upward.

## PHOTOGRAPH OF JUAN CAILLES.

Filipino General Who is Making Things Lively for American Troops.



This is the first photograph reaching this country of Gen. Juan Cailles, the Filipino guerrilla whom our boys in blue are chasing. It was taken in a studio at Hongkong during the Spanish-American war. Copies of this photograph are issued by our commander-in-chief at Manila to aid in the capture of the outlaw.

The Sporting Houses and How They Are Managed—Shaking Dice for Meals and Betting on Orange Seeds—Prize Fighting With Crickets and Quails—How the Christians Are Ruining Chinese Morality, or Chinese Vice Versus European Vice—The Spirits and How They Clog Railroad Enterprises—The New Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Building Which Ruined Pekin—And the Jesuit Church Which Brought Trouble to Tien Tsin—Queer Superstitions of a Queer People.

ruined by European teachings. Take for instance the comrade of the American consul at Shanghai, a man who started life as a clerk, and who has now a business outside of the consulate which brings him in about \$15,000 a year. He says that he has made some money out of the foreigners, but that he would be glad to give up his every cent if they were out of China. He told me that he had seven sons, who might have been good boys, but they had been so ruined by foreigners that their only idea now was to stay out of the country and spend money. I have heard the same from rich Chinese at the other treaty ports, and I can see that their sons are, as a rule, worthless. They have all the old vices of their fathers, and they are more. They are gamblers, profligate and spendthrifts, while their fathers, on the other hand, are thrifty, upright good fellows and good business men.

## THE CHINESE GOD OF LUCK.

One reason why gambling is so universal here is through the superstition of the Chinese. They consider life largely a matter of luck. There is a large class of professional fortune tellers who are consulted upon everything. They are asked to point out the lucky and unlucky days for all sorts of actions. There are certain days upon which the Chinese will not do certain

## B. Y. ACADEMY EXPLORING EXPEDITION

Not Yet Advised of the Results of the November Election.

Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico, November 28, 1900.—On the day we reached Culiacan our drive was a heavy one, for we expected mail, and had heard nothing from home for two months. Imagine our disappointment when reaching the postoffice we were informed, "There is none." That night as we ate our bean soup and tortillas for supper there was not much joking or laughing among the boys. The next morning, Nov. 29th, we rolled out a little late, as our animals were tired, and passing through the city I called at the postoffice to post a letter, and being recognized by the clerk was advised that our mail had arrived. All had come but the papers, and as private correspondents supposed we obtained election news from the papers we are yet in ignorance as to the details of election.

Culiacan is the capital of the State of Sinaloa. It has about ten thousand inhabitants and is second in the state in commercial importance. The streets are well laid out and paved, the buildings are solid and substantial, but like all Mexican buildings are low and flat-roofed. To an American all the houses are odd from the absence of windows, or having windows for the iron gratings behind them like the windows in jail. One feature of a Mexican city or town, however, is worthy of imitation. It is the beautiful plazas. Culiacan has two well kept and tastefully arranged, round the outside are orange trees, now bearing under the delicate yellow low fruit. Inside are trees of many kinds, from the dense umbrella tree to the almost leafless mesquite. Benches are arranged conveniently both in the shade and in the sun, and the center is a band stand. On every clear evening until nine o'clock, the band plays and both the rich and the poor, the bond and the free mingle together to enjoy the music.

Commercially Culiacan is a shipping center for the mines round about; and is the terminus of the narrow railroad running up from the coast. It has also a soap factory, several shoe factories, and saw and planing mills. The great center of attraction for visitors, however, is the old church, a large stone building with two towers, in the very center of town and just opposite one of the beautiful plazas.

The expedition reached no little stir in town and as we marched down the principal street the natives gazed at us as we would at a circus parade. Following southeast from the capital our road came through a country more and more rolling, and we reached what might be called mountains, but for the fact that those still further east were so much higher. Everywhere was a thick growth of thorny brush and cactus, not only the brush but the trees have thorns, except one, called by the natives the holy or sanctified tree, from the mere fact that it has no thorns. At every few leagues along the road we would pass ranches, some with one house others having the dignity of a village and having a dozen or more. The houses are mean and poor, with dirt floors, and thatched roofs. Pigs roam at will inside or out. Close to the house is a little shanty with a peculiarly constructed stove made of brick and plastered over. There are three holes and as many fireplaces. No place is arranged for the smoke to escape, hence the shanty is so full at times it becomes unbearable. By the stove is the over-present metate stone on which the corn after being boiled in lime and washed is ground to a paste. This paste is made into small pancakes or tortillas by the patting of the hands, and these in turn are cooked on the fire close by.

Many of these ranches manufacture what the natives call queso, or cheese, but which bears but slight resemblance to the genuine article. It is pressed in a peculiar way. A few days ago Mr. Hennings and I called at a ranch to obtain pasturage. In a dingy room six or eight persons stood around a low table or bench, each having his hands on something and apparently pressing down. We thought someone was sick, or had drowned and was being resuscitated; but when the owner came out to wait on us we were informed that they were pressing cheese.

Besides pigs and poor dogs around these ranches, there are always a great many children. These are dirty, unkempt, but not ragged, at least many of them are not, for their wearing apparel consists principally of a straw hat, and sometimes the hat is wanting. But they play as other children, roll in the dust, play in the mud or paddle and wade in the water.

The ranch and village people, more than those in the larger towns, are superstitious, and are firm believers in the saints to whom they pray. One story, believed by all, is to the effect that a number of years ago, how many is not stated, two towns were in need of an image of Saint Francisco, Cumuripa and a town beyond called Trejo. The images were accordingly made in Spain and shipped to Guaymas, the port of en-

things. If they open a granary on one day they think that on the next day they will not plant upon another certain day for the same reason, while on a third they never have because if they do their heads will be covered with boils.

Every day has its own superstition and its own luck. If you dig a well on the day called Mow you will get only bitter waters, and if you eat dog's flesh on the day called Sit the spirit of the dog will haunt you. On the day Shab you must not sweep for the dead or you will have sorrow upon sorrow, and if you make sauce on the day called Sun it will be tasteless. There are ten days called male days, and twelve which are called female days. If you wear new suit of clothes for the first time on the day called Chow you will be sure to die away from home, and if you buy land on the day called Mow, you will be unlucky. I take these facts from Archdeacon Gray's book on China, which is long since out of print. These superstitions as to luck extend to the configuration of the country and also to the legends connected with localities. Some time ago a telegraph was projected between Canton and Hongkong. The scheme was bitterly opposed, the chief objection being the bad luck which it was sure to bring to the two cities. The Chinese said, "Canton is known to us as the City of Rams or Sheep and the mouth of the river where the telegraph line is to go, is known as the Tiger's mouth, while the district opposite Hongkong is Kowloon, or the Nine Dragons. What can you expect when you put up a telegraph line to lead the sheep right into the tiger's mouth and amongst the nine dragons?"

## DON'T FAIL TO GET THE NEW YEAR'S NEWS TUESDAY NEXT

It will contain the full report of the Tabernacle new century meeting, including President Snow's greeting to the world. A special article on the old century and the new, written specially for the "News" by Captain Geo. L. Kilmer; a beautiful half tone illustration, "The Twentieth Century," and the complete story of the famous French certain days, upon which the Chinese will not do certain

her arrival. After looking the ship over, we all enjoyed a lunch of hard-tack in the cabin.

The harbor is a pretty bay almost enclosed by solid rocks running out into the ocean, but it is entirely inadequate even for the small coast steamers. All vessels anchor out from the shore, the larger ones farther out, and row boats or barges hug the shore, and from them. So much had been told us of Mazatlan port that we had expected to see large wharves and many vessels lying alongside, but there are no wharves to speak of, and, at present, there are only two vessels of any size at anchor.

But the town itself is interesting, with its narrow streets, sidewalks four to six feet wide, low, flat-roofed houses, and strange jumble of people, speaking Spanish, but little understood yet by us. There are two points of peculiar interest: one, the old church, the other the market. We visited the market in the morning. It was filled with people, some buying others selling. Little stalls and counters fill up the main body of the great room, which is well lighted with electric lights. There were for sale principally beans, corn, meat, fish, a few vegetables, mostly squash, and fruits: coconuts, oranges, bananas. Sugar came as much in demand as anything, and not only in the market, but in every little shop in town it is exhibited for sale. Down one side of the market hot lunches are served. We were hungry and partly to eat and partly to see what there was to eat we sat down. The table was clean and covered with a clean white cloth. A lady with a big white apron served us from earthen pots kept hot over a fire of coals. In one is fish, another tripe and corn, a dish called Menuda, and much relished by the Mexicans. Beans were in another, a mulion stew in another, meat with peppers, chili con carne, in another. Pointing to one and saying, "este, we were served. The dish proved to be Menuda. Another dish was mutton and peppers, while another was beans and tortillas. Our toll was 12 cents American money. The cheapest meals in the world are served in Mexico. I am not saying the best meals. But if one will be content to eat the food of the country he can live as cheaply here as in any other country, and live as well. If he is fond of fruit here are the prices: he must pay in some places: Oranges, six cents a dozen; bananas, from two and a half to five cents per dozen; coconuts two and a half to five cents a piece; dried figs, ten cents per pound; and other fruit in its season in proportion (American

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money). Apples are in market, but they are of inferior quality. Pine apples and peaches are not seen yet. Lemons and lemons are plentiful and are very cheap.

Continuing down the side of the market we came to the "old woman's" "grandmother's" counter, where a day or so old women begged of us to buy tortillas. "Mine are the best," says one. "Mine are hot from the griddle," says another. "Oh, yes," try mine," cried one of the oldest and most miserly looking. We were attracted and purchased a few cents worth, receiving the kind ladies' benediction along with her tortillas.



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WITH THE DAY'S FREE WEARING walk for forever two hundred miles. Such is the life and experience of a traveler. As we had extra horses we could fit them out, and since then we have traveled together. We mourn the loss, however, of a little burro which we were forced to leave by the roadside. He had come with us from Oaxaca, had borne his burden over the Jesus Maria mountains, the worst trails in the world, had swam the Mayo river, and now when all the hard work was over, and we were about to enter land abounding in grass and corn, and everything a burro and a mule naturally like, the little fellow could go no farther.

On the 25th, late in the evening, we reached Mazatlan, one of the principal sea ports of Mexico, on the western coast, and the chief sea port of the State of Sinaloa; and as we saw the ocean heard the dull beat of the waves on the coast, saw a couple of sailing ships standing out at sea, saw the large grove of coconut trees with two and three crops of fruit still on the trees; saw the banana orchards, the Mango trees and the orange groves, most of the boys realized more than ever that we are truly in a foreign land.

Of course, a bath in the surf was on the program, also a visit to a ship anchored there. The boys enjoyed both the waves, in spite of the chafing mouth and ears, and the ship in spite of the smell that always accompanies a ship, and that reminds one who has been forced to live in the most disagreeable of a German barque, Professor Koch, just from Hamburg, the Horn. She had had a rough experience, had lost a man in the sea, and one on shore since

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